

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 236670

73

ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSM-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-10 DHA-02 ORM-02 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /104 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:EOJONES:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:EOJONES

S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

SSM - MR. MCANDREW

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

NEA/ ARN - MR. DRAPER

NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH

NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY

----- 074429

O 232158Z SEP 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION SINAI

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 236670

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
CINCEUR

UNCLAS STATE 236670

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL; CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - SEPTEMBER 23

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE, FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR
SEPTEMBER 23, 1976:

SPOKESMAN:

I WOULD LIKE TO READ INTO THE RECORD A STATEMENT BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE ON THE OCCASION OF THE INAUGURATION OF
PRESIDENT ELIAS SARKIS, OF THE REPUBLIC OF LEBANON,
SEPTEMBER 23, 1976. WE WILL PASS OUT COPIES SO YOU DON'T
HAVE TO TAKE NOTES.

QUOTE -- THE UNITED STATES IS CONVINCED THAT THE OCCASION
OF THE INSTALLATION OF A NEW PRESIDENT OF LEBANON OFFERS AN
OPPORTUNITY WHICH MUST NOT BE LOST TO BRING AN END TO THE
FIGHTING AND TO BEGIN REBUILDING NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS. IT
WILL BE ESSENTIAL FOR ALL PARTIES IN LEBANON TO SUPPORT
AND STRENGTHEN THE AUTHORITY OF LEBANON'S NEW PRESIDENT
ELECTED BY LEGITIMATE PROCESSES SO THAT ALL LEBANESE
MAY PROMPTLY BEGIN THEIR RETURN TO PRODUCTIVE LIFE.
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 236670

THE VIOLENCE AND DESTRUCTION IN LEBANON HAVE GONE ON FAR
TOO LONG. THE COSTS IN HUMAN SUFFERING HAVE BEEN FAR
TOO HIGH. IT IS CLEAR THAT NO ONE CAN GAIN FROM CONTIN-
UED FIGHTING: COUNTLESS MORE MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN
WILL LOSE LIVES, PROPERTY, AND HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.
IT IS A TIME FOR MAGNANIMITY, RESTRAINT, AND
COMPROMISE.

THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT A SOLUTION CAN BE FOUND
THAT WILL PRESERVE THE COUNTRY'S INDEPENDENCE, TERRITORIAL
INTEGRITY AND NATIONAL UNITY. SOLUTIONS BASED ON THE
PARTITION OF LEBANON ARE INVITATIONS TO FURTHER STRIFE
AND INSTABILITY. THE STATES SO CREATED WOULD NOT BE

VIALE AND WOULD INVITE EXTERNAL INTERVENTION.

WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE PRINCIPLES FOR A POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION AMONG THE LEBANESE PARTIES ENUNCIATED LAST JANUARY AND FEBRUARY PROVIDE A BASIS FOR INSTITUTIONS THAT WILL MEET THE NEEDS OF THE LEBANESE PEOPLE AND NATION. WE HOPE THAT PRESIDENT SARKIS WILL BE ABLE TO BRING HIS COUNTRYMEN TO THE ROUNDTABLE TALKS HE HAS PROPOSED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THAT THE PROCESS OF RECONCILIATION AND REBUILDING CAN BEGIN.

THE MAJOR OBJECTIVE IN NEGOTIATING A SOLUTION WILL BE TO PRESERVE A UNITED COUNTRY, LED BY A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WHICH WILL ASSURE SECURITY AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES IN THE COUNTRY. THE PRINCIPLES PROPOSED IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY WERE DESIGNED TO GIVE PRACTICAL POLITICAL EXPRESSION TO THE CONCEPT THAT THERE SHOULD BE A PARTNERSHIP OF EQUALS IN A REUNITED LEBANON. IN OUR VIEW, THIS CALLS FOR POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENTS THAT ALL LEBANESE WILL PERCEIVE AS FAIR AND EQUITABLE. IT PRESUPPOSES THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE AT ITS DISPOSAL SECURITY FORCES LOYAL TO IT WHICH CAN RESTORE CONFIDENCE IN THE AUTHORITY AND ABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN DOMESTIC ORDER. AND IT WILL REQUIRE THAT THE PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON LIVE IN PEACE WITH THEIR LEBANESE HOSTS AND NEIGHBORS, WITHOUT CHALLENGING THE AUTHORITY OF A CENTRAL LEBANESE ADMINISTRATION.

PAGE 04 STATE 236670

TION.

THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE AREA AND THE ARAB LEAGUE ARE IN A POSITION, EACH IN ITS OWN WAY, TO MAKE CONSTRUCTIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO A POLITICAL SOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT. CONTINUATION OF THE FIGHTING CANNOT SERVE THEIR INTERESTS. PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND INTERNATIONAL STABILITY WILL BE IN JEOPARDY AS LONG AS THE FIGHTING CONTINUES. AN END

TO THE FIGHTING IN TURN WOULD CREATE CONDITIONS MORE CONDUCIVE TO A RESUMPTION OF THE SEARCH FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF THE BROADER MIDDLE EAST QUESTION, WHICH WOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE CONCERNS OF THE STATES OF THE AREA FOR THEIR SECURITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, AS WELL AS THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE.

WE ARE PREPARED TO HELP TO BRING AN END TO THE FIGHTING IN LEBANON AND TO ACHIEVE A POLITICAL SOLUTION. THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES LIE IN ALLEVIATION OF HUMAN SUFFERING, IN THE RESTORATION OF UNITY AND STABILITY BASED ON JUSTICE IN LEBANON, AND IN THE REDUCTION OF TENSION AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE AMONG THE NATIONS

OF THE MIDDLE EAST. WE WILL BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT OR UNDERTAKE ANY DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE REQUESTED BY THE PARTIES.

WE WILL CONTINUE OUR HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMS WHICH ALREADY AMOUNT TO MORE THAN DOLS 10 MILLION IN HOSPITAL AND OTHER MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES AND FOODSTUFFS DISTRIBUTED AS FAIRLY AS POSSIBLE ON BOTH SIDES OF THE LINES. WE WILL DO THIS AND MORE AS NECESSARY. WE ARE CONSIDERING WAYS OF SHIPPING SUBSTANTIAL QUANTITIES OF WHEAT UNDER PUBLIC LAW 480.

WE WILL ALSO PLAY OUR PART, AFTER A SETTLEMENT IS ACHIEVED, IN HELPING PRESIDENT SARKIS AND HIS GOVERNMENT REBUILD LEBANESE INSTITUTIONS AND THE LEBANESE ECONOMY. WE HAVE INVITED HIM TO SEND A PERSONAL ENVOY TO WASHINGTON AS SOON AS HE CONSIDERS IT APPROPRIATE IN ORDER TO DISCUSS SPECIFIC WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN BE HELPFUL. WE HAVE UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 236670

SOUGHT FROM THE CONGRESS AN APPROPRIATION OF DOLS 20 MILLION TO BEGIN THE PROCESS.

THIS IS A TIME OF OPPORTUNITY AND HOPE FOR A SUFFERING PEOPLE IN AN AREA ALREADY TOO LONG DEVASTATED BY WAR. THE UNITED STATES SHARES THE CONVICTION THAT THIS OPPORTUNITY MUST NOT BE LOST. END QUOTE.

Q. I PROBABLY SHOULD KNOW THE ANSWER TO THIS, BUT WHAT PRINCIPLES WERE PROPOSED IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

A. I ONLY RECEIVED THIS A MOMENT AGO TO READ OUT, HENRY. I WILL HAVE TO CHECK ON PRECISELY WHAT IS ALLUDED TO WITH REGARD TO THAT SENTENCE.

CONCERNING ANY OTHER QUESTIONS ON THIS STATEMENT, IF YOU WILL GIVE ME THE QUESTION, I WILL TAKE IT AND TRY TO GET AN ANSWER FOR YOU. I HAVE NO FURTHER DETAILS REGARDING ANY OF THE POINTS MADE IN THE ANNOUNCEMENT.

Q. PRESIDENT SARKIS, IN HIS REMARKS APPARENTLY MADE TODAY, PRAISED THE INTERVENTION OF SYRIA INTO LEBANON. DOES THE UNITED STATES SHARE THAT SENTIMENT NOW THAT THE SYRIAN INTERVENTION WAS HELPFUL. "PRAISE" MAY BE THE WRONG WORD -- "SUPPORTED."

A. YES. I HAVE NOT SEEN WHAT PRESIDENT SARKIS HAS SAID, SO I AM REALLY NOT --

Q. BUT GENERALLY WHAT IS THE AMERICAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SYRIAN INTERVENTION NOW, AND HOW LONG SHOULD IT GO ON?

A. I WOULD RATHER TAKE ANY QUESTION WITH REGARD TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT I HAVE JUST MADE AND GET YOU A CAREFUL ANSWER ON THAT, KEN.

Q. WHAT IS THE UNITED STATES PREPARED TO DO TO HELP BRING AN END TO THE FIGHTING AND TO ACHIEVE A POLITICAL SOLUTION?

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 STATE 236670

A. AGAIN, WE WILL SIMPLY HAVE TO TAKE ANY QUESTION OF ELUCIDATION ON THE STATEMENT JUST MADE.

Q. FRED, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF YOU COULD GET A GLOSS ON THE SENTENCE THAT SAYS, "IT PRESUPPOSES THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE AT ITS DISPOSAL SECURITY FORCES LOYAL TO IT WHICH CAN RESTORE CONFIDENCE IN THE AUTHORITY AND ABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN DOMESTIC ORDER."

THIS IS ONE OF THE CENTRAL ISSUES IN THE WHOLE LEBANESE PROBLEM, AND HAS BEEN SINCE THE BEGINNING.

WHAT DOES "PRESUPPOSES" MEAN?

A. I WILL TRY TO GET CLARIFICATION OF THAT.

Q. ON PAGE 3, THE LAST SENTENCE OF THE FIRST PARAGRAPH READS, "WE WILL BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT OR UNDERTAKE ANY DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE REQUESTED BY THE PARTIES."

IT IS NOT CLEAR TO ME WHETHER WE ARE REFERRING TO LEBANON ALONE THERE, OR TO THE GENERAL PEACE EFFORT IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF THE SECRETARY IS PRE-

PARED TO GO BACK TO HELP EFFECTUATE EITHER?

A. I WILL SEE WHAT I CAN GET ON THAT.

Q. THE SECRETARY HAS SUGGESTED IN THE PAST A ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCE, AND THIS STATEMENT, I THINK, REFERS TO SARKIS MENTIONING ONE, TOO. ARE WE TALKING ABOUT THE SAME THING? IS SARKIS ENDORSING THE SECRETARY'S CONCEPT, OR IS THERE SOME VARIANCE?

A. LET ME CHECK ON THAT.

Q. COULD YOU DEFINE THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, ON THE BOTTOM OF PAGE 2?

A. I AM AFRAID I CANNOT EXPAND ON ANY STATEMENT MADE IN HERE. I WILL HAVE TO TAKE THE QUESTION AND ATTEMPT TO

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 07 STATE 236670

GET A FURTHER DEFINITION OF THAT KIND OF TERMINOLOGY,
IF WE ARE IN A POSITION TO OFFER IT AT THIS TIME.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY ANALYSIS, FRED, OR CAN YOU GET IT,
ON THE CURRENT LEVEL OF FIGHTING REPORTED IN BEIRUT TODAY?

A. I HAVE NO INFORMATION ON THAT, KEN, BUT YOU KNOW, AS
A RULE --.

Q. --AN ASSESSMENT OF WHAT THE MEANS TOWARD THE VIABILITY
OF SARKIS' ADMINISTRATION.

A. IN THE PAST, WE HAVE NOT GONE INTO A SITREP TYPE OF
ANALYSIS AT THIS BRIEFING. I WILL LOOK INTO IT, BUT I
AM NOT HOPEFUL THAT I CAN REALLY GIVE YOU A KIND OF
MILITARY SITREP BEARING ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE
INAUGURATION. I AM NOT HOPEFUL I WILL GET YOU ANYTHING
CONCRETE ON THAT.

Q. IF YOU CAN'T DO THAT, THEN CAN YOU GET A MORE GENERAL
ANALYSIS OF WHAT THE PRESENT MILITARY SITUATION IMPLIES
FOR THE STABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT, WHICH IS VERY MUCH A
CENTRAL POINT HERE?

A. I WILL SEE WHAT I CAN GET, BUT, AS I SAY, I THINK
THIS INVOLVES OBTAINING A MILITARY ASSESSMENT OF THE
PRESENT SITUATION. AS A RULE, I HAVE NOT BEEN IN A
POSITION TO GET THAT, AND I DON'T THINK THAT --.

Q. THIS STATEMENT BECOMES MEANINGLESS IF WE DON'T HAVE
SOME KIND OF BACKGROUND CONCERNING THE MILITARY SITUATION
AND AN ASSESSMENT OF WHERE WE STAND.

A. I DON'T THINK IT IS MEANINGLESS AT ALL. THIS IS A
STATEMENT OF --

Q. IF THEY ARE GOING TO CONTINUE FIGHTING, AND SARKIS IS
GOING TO BE THE PRESIDENT WITHOUT AN ARMY OR WITHOUT ANY
CENTRAL AUTHORITY, THEN WE HAVE GOTTEN NOWHERE, AND THIS
IS AN EXPRESSION OF HOPE.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 08 STATE 236670

A. IT IS AN EXPRESSION OF THE AMERICAN POSITION WITH
REGARD TO THE PROSPECTS FOR --.

Q. I AM NOT DOUBTING YOUR CHARACTERIZATION, I AM SIMPLY
SAYING THAT IT DOESN'T MEAN VERY MUCH TO US IN TERMS OF

REALITY UNLESS WE HAVE SOME CLEAR IDEA ABOUT THE AMERICAN THINKING OF THE MILITARY SITUATION AND THE POTENTIAL STABILITY IN THE AREA.

A. I SUGGEST THAT THE STATEMENT BE READ AND STUDIED THOROUGHLY BEFORE WE ATTEMPT TO GO INTO ANY DISCUSSION OF IT. AS I SAY, I WILL ATTEMPT TO GET ANSWERS TO THOSE QUESTIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN POSED, AND WHICH MIGHT BE APPROPRIATELY ANSWERED AT THIS TIME. BUT, AGAIN, I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT FROM THIS PODIUM WE WILL OFFER MILITARY ASSESSMENTS OF THE CIVIL WAR IN LEBANON AS A SITREP WHICH MIGHT BEAR UPON THIS STATEMENT OF AMERICAN POLICY.

Q. I WOULD LIKE TO POSE ANOTHER QUESTION ON THE LEBANESE STATEMENT. AT THE BOTTOM OF PAGE TWO, AGAIN, YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT THE NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF THE BROADER MIDDLE EAST QUESTION, WHICH WOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE CONCERNS OF THE STATES OF THE AREA FOR THEIR SECURITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY.

CAN YOU SPECIFY WHICH STATES YOU ARE REFERRING TO?

A. I CANNOT SPECIFY. AS I SAY, THIS IS A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE ON OUR PART, AND I AM NOT IN A POSITION HERE TO OFFER YOU PRECISION AS TO WHAT STATES ARE ALLUDED TO IN THIS POLICY STATEMENT.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS POSTED IN THE DEPARTMENT PRESS OFFICE IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION TAKEN AT THE SEPTEMBER 22 PRESS BRIEFING:

Q. HAVE THERE BEEN ANY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS WITH REGARD TO THE MURDERS OF AMBASSADOR MELOY AND HIS COMPANIONS IN BEIRUT?

A. THERE ARE NO RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS CASE TO
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 09 STATE 236670

REPORT. THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED TO THE OBJECTIVE OF BRINGING TO JUSTICE THE PERPETRATORS OF THIS CRIME AND WE CONTINUE TO EXERT EVERY EFFORT THROUGH VARIOUS CHANNELS TOWARD THIS END. UNFORTUNATELY, THE UNSETTLED CONDITIONS IN BEIRUT COMPLICATE THESE EFFORTS, BUT WE ARE CERTAIN THAT ALL PARTIES IN THE AREA -- INCLUDING THE PLO -- ARE FULLY AWARE OF OUR DETERMINATION TO SEE THAT JUSTICE IS DONE.

ROBINSON

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 STATE 236670

73

ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 R

66011

DRAFTED BY:NEA/P:EOJONES:RGH

APPROVED BY:NEA/P:EOJONES

----- 006380

R 260105Z SEP 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

UNCLAS STATE 236670

FOL RPT STATE 236670 ACTION BEIRUT AMMAN CAIRO DAMASCUS
TEL AVIV ABUDHABI ALGIERS BAGHDAD DOHA MANAMA RABAT SANA
TEHRAN TRIPOLI TUNIS SINAI DHAKHAN GENEVA KHARTOUM LONDON
MOGADISCIO MOSCOW NATO NOUAKCHOTT PARIS ROME USUN NEW YORK
CINCEUR 23 SEP QUOTE

UNCLAS STATE 236670

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL; CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - SEPTEMBER 23

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE, FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR
SEPTEMBER 23, 1976:

SPOKESMAN:

I WOULD LIKE TO READ INTO THE RECORD A STATEMENT BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE ON THE OCCASION OF THE INAUGURATION OF
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 236670

PRESIDENT ELIAS SARKIS, OF THE REPUBLIC OF LEBANON,
SEPTEMBER 23, 1976. WE WILL PASS OUT COPIES SO YOU DON'T
HAVE TO TAKE NOTES.

QUOTE -- THE UNITED STATES IS CONVINCED THAT THE OCCASION
OF THE INSTALLATION OF A NEW PRESIDENT OF LEBANON OFFERS AN
OPPORTUNITY WHICH MUST NOT BE LOST TO BRING AN END TO THE

FIGHTING AND TO BEGIN REBUILDING NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS. IT WILL BE ESSENTIAL FOR ALL PARTIES IN LEBANON TO SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN THE AUTHORITY OF LEBANON'S NEW PRESIDENT ELECTED BY LEGITIMATE PROCESSES SO THAT ALL LEBANESE MAY PROMPTLY BEGIN THEIR RETURN TO PRODUCTIVE LIFE.

THE VIOLENCE AND DESTRUCTION IN LEBANON HAVE GONE ON FAR TOO LONG. THE COSTS IN HUMAN SUFFERING HAVE BEEN FAR TOO HIGH. IT IS CLEAR THAT NO ONE CAN GAIN FROM CONTINUED FIGHTING: COUNTLESS MORE MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN WILL LOSE LIVES, PROPERTY, AND HOPE FOR THE FUTURE. IT IS A TIME FOR MAGNANIMITY, RESTRAINT, AND COMPROMISE.

THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT A SOLUTION CAN BE FOUND THAT WILL PRESERVE THE COUNTRY'S INDEPENDENCE, TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND NATIONAL UNITY. SOLUTIONS BASED ON THE PARTITION OF LEBANON ARE INVITATIONS TO FURTHER STRIFE AND INSTABILITY. THE STATES SO CREATED WOULD NOT BE VIABLE AND WOULD INVITE EXTERNAL INTERVENTION.

WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE PRINCIPLES FOR A POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION AMONG THE LEBANESE PARTIES ENUNCIATED LAST JANUARY AND FEBRUARY PROVIDE A BASIS FOR INSTITUTIONS THAT WILL MEET THE NEEDS OF THE LEBANESE PEOPLE AND NATION. WE HOPE THAT PRESIDENT SARKIS WILL BE ABLE TO BRING HIS COUNTRYMEN TO THE ROUNDTABLE TALKS HE HAS PROPOSED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THAT THE PROCESS OF RECONCILIATION AND REBUILDING CAN BEGIN.

THE MAJOR OBJECTIVE IN NEGOTIATING A SOLUTION WILL BE TO PRESERVE A UNITED COUNTRY, LED BY A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WHICH WILL ASSURE SECURITY AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES IN THE COUNTRY. THE PRINCIPLES UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 236670

PROPOSED IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY WERE DESIGNED TO GIVE PRACTICAL POLITICAL EXPRESSION TO THE CONCEPT THAT THERE SHOULD BE A PARTNERSHIP OF EQUALS IN A REUNITED LEBANON. IN OUR VIEW, THIS CALLS FOR POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENTS THAT ALL LEBANESE WILL PERCEIVE AS FAIR AND EQUITABLE. IT PRESUPPOSES THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE AT ITS DISPOSAL SECURITY FORCES LOYAL TO IT WHICH CAN RESTORE CONFIDENCE IN THE AUTHORITY AND ABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN DOMESTIC ORDER. AND IT WILL REQUIRE THAT THE PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON LIVE IN PEACE WITH THEIR LEBANESE HOSTS AND NEIGHBORS, WITHOUT CHALLENGING THE AUTHORITY OF A CENTRAL LEBANESE ADMINISTRATION.

THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE AREA AND THE ARAB LEAGUE ARE IN A POSITION, EACH IN ITS OWN WAY, TO MAKE CONSTRUCTIVE

CONTRIBUTIONS TO A POLITICAL SOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT.
CONTINUATION OF THE FIGHTING CANNOT SERVE THEIR INTERESTS.
PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND INTERNATIONAL STABILITY WILL
BE IN JEOPARDY AS LONG AS THE FIGHTING CONTINUES. AN END

TO THE FIGHTING IN TURN WOULD CREATE CONDITIONS MORE
CONDUCTIVE TO A RESUMPTION OF THE SEARCH FOR A NEGOTIATED
SETTLEMENT OF THE BROADER MIDDLE EAST QUESTION, WHICH
WOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE CONCERNS OF THE STATES OF
THE AREA FOR THEIR SECURITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY,
AS WELL AS THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIAN
PEOPLE.

WE ARE PREPARED TO HELP TO BRING AN END TO THE FIGHTING
IN LEBANON AND TO ACHIEVE A POLITICAL SOLUTION. THE
INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES LIE IN ALLEVIATION OF
HUMAN SUFFERING, IN THE RESTORATION OF UNITY AND STABILITY
BASED ON JUSTICE IN LEBANON, AND IN THE REDUCTION OF
TENSION AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE AMONG THE NATIONS
OF THE MIDDLE EAST. WE WILL BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT OR
UNDERTAKE ANY DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE REQUESTED BY THE
PARTIES.

WE WILL CONTINUE OUR HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMS WHICH ALREADY
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 236670

AMOUNT TO MORE THAN DOLS 10 MILLION IN HOSPITAL AND OTHER
MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES AND FOODSTUFFS DISTRIBUTED
AS FAIRLY AS POSSIBLE ON BOTH SIDES OF THE LINES. WE
WILL DO THIS AND MORE AS NECESSARY. WE ARE CONSIDERING
WAYS OF SHIPPING SUBSTANTIAL QUANTITIES OF WHEAT UNDER
PUBLIC LAW 480.

WE WILL ALSO PLAY OUR PART, AFTER A SETTLEMENT IS
ACHIEVED, IN HELPING PRESIDENT SARKIS AND HIS GOVERNMENT
REBUILD LEBANESE INSTITUTIONS AND THE LEBANESE ECONOMY.
WE HAVE INVITED HIM TO SEND A PERSONAL ENVOY TO WASHING-
TON AS SOON AS HE CONSIDERS IT APPROPRIATE IN ORDER TO
DISCUSS SPECIFIC WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN BE HELPFUL. WE HAVE
SOUGHT FROM THE CONGRESS AN APPROPRIATION OF DOLS 20 MIL-
LION TO BEGIN THE PROCESS.

THIS IS A TIME OF OPPORTUNITY AND HOPE FOR A SUFFERING
PEOPLE IN AN AREA ALREADY TOO LONG DEVASTATED BY WAR.
THE UNITED STATES SHARES THE CONVICTION THAT THIS
OPPORTUNITY MUST NOT BE LOST. END QUOTE.

Q. I PROBABLY SHOULD KNOW THE ANSWER TO THIS, BUT WHAT
PRINCIPLES WERE PROPOSED IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY ARE WE
TALKING ABOUT?

A. I ONLY RECEIVED THIS A MOMENT AGO TO READ OUT, HENRY.

I WILL HAVE TO CHECK ON PRECISELY WHAT IS ALLUDED TO WITH REGARD TO THAT SENTENCE.

CONCERNING ANY OTHER QUESTIONS ON THIS STATEMENT, IF YOU WILL GIVE ME THE QUESTION, I WILL TAKE IT AND TRY TO GET AN ANSWER FOR YOU. I HAVE NO FURTHER DETAILS REGARDING ANY OF THE POINTS MADE IN THE ANNOUNCEMENT.

Q. PRESIDENT SARKIS, IN HIS REMARKS APPARENTLY MADE TODAY, PRAISED THE INTERVENTION OF SYRIA INTO LEBANON. DOES THE UNITED STATES SHARE THAT SENTIMENT NOW THAT THE SYRIAN INTERVENTION WAS HELPFUL. "PRAISE" MAY BE THE WRONG WORD -- "SUPPORTED."

A. YES. I HAVE NOT SEEN WHAT PRESIDENT SARKIS HAS SAID, UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 236670

SO I AM REALLY NOT --

Q. BUT GENERALLY WHAT IS THE AMERICAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SYRIAN INTERVENTION NOW, AND HOW LONG SHOULD IT GO ON?

A. I WOULD RATHER TAKE ANY QUESTION WITH REGARD TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT I HAVE JUST MADE AND GET YOU A CAREFUL ANSWER ON THAT, KEN.

Q. WHAT IS THE UNITED STATES PREPARED TO DO TO HELP BRING AN END TO THE FIGHTING AND TO ACHIEVE A POLITICAL SOLUTION?

A. AGAIN, WE WILL SIMPLY HAVE TO TAKE ANY QUESTION OF ELUCIDATION ON THE STATEMENT JUST MADE.

Q. FRED, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF YOU COULD GET A GLOSS ON THE SENTENCE THAT SAYS, "IT PRESUPPOSES THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE AT ITS DISPOSAL SECURITY FORCES LOYAL TO IT WHICH CAN RESTORE CONFIDENCE IN THE AUTHORITY AND ABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN DOMESTIC ORDER."

THIS IS ONE OF THE CENTRAL ISSUES IN THE WHOLE LEBANESE PROBLEM, AND HAS BEEN SINCE THE BEGINNING.

WHAT DOES "PRESUPPOSES" MEAN?

A. I WILL TRY TO GET CLARIFICATION OF THAT.

Q. ON PAGE 3, THE LAST SENTENCE OF THE FIRST PARAGRAPH READS, "WE WILL BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT OR UNDERTAKE ANY DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE REQUESTED BY THE PARTIES."

IT IS NOT CLEAR TO ME WHETHER WE ARE REFERRING TO LEBANON ALONE THERE, OR TO THE GENERAL PEACE EFFORT IN THE MIDDLE

EAST, AND I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF THE SECRETARY IS PRE-
PARED TO GO BACK TO HELP EFFECTUATE EITHER?

A. I WILL SEE WHAT I CAN GET ON THAT.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 STATE 236670

Q. THE SECRETARY HAS SUGGESTED IN THE PAST A ROUND-TABLE
CONFERENCE, AND THIS STATEMENT, I THINK, REFERS TO SARKIS
MENTIONING ONE, TOO. ARE WE TALKING ABOUT THE SAME
THING? IS SARKIS ENDORSING THE SECRETARY'S CONCEPT, OR
IS THERE SOME VARIANCE?

A. LET ME CHECK ON THAT.

Q. COULD YOU DEFINE THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, ON THE BOTTOM OF PAGE 2?

A. I AM AFRAID I CANNOT EXPAND ON ANY STATEMENT MADE IN
HERE. I WILL HAVE TO TAKE THE QUESTION AND ATTEMPT TO
GET A FURTHER DEFINITION OF THAT KIND OF TERMINOLOGY,
IF WE ARE IN A POSITION TO OFFER IT AT THIS TIME.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY ANALYSIS, FRED, OR CAN YOU GET IT,
ON THE CURRENT LEVEL OF FIGHTING REPORTED IN BEIRUT TODAY?

A. I HAVE NO INFORMATION ON THAT, KEN, BUT YOU KNOW, AS
A RULE --.

Q. --AN ASSESSMENT OF WHAT THE MEANS TOWARD THE VIABILITY
OF SARKIS' ADMINISTRATION.

A. IN THE PAST, WE HAVE NOT GONE INTO A SITREP TYPE OF
ANALYSIS AT THIS BRIEFING. I WILL LOOK INTO IT, BUT I
AM NOT HOPEFUL THAT I CAN REALLY GIVE YOU A KIND OF
MILITARY SITREP BEARING ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE
INAUGURATION. I AM NOT HOPEFUL I WILL GET YOU ANYTHING
CONCRETE ON THAT.

Q. IF YOU CAN'T DO THAT, THEN CAN YOU GET A MORE GENERAL
ANALYSIS OF WHAT THE PRESENT MILITARY SITUATION IMPLIES
FOR THE STABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT, WHICH IS VERY MUCH A
CENTRAL POINT HERE?

A. I WILL SEE WHAT I CAN GET, BUT, AS I SAY, I THINK
THIS INVOLVES OBTAINING A MILITARY ASSESSMENT OF THE
PRESENT SITUATION. AS A RULE, I HAVE NOT BEEN IN A
POSITION TO GET THAT, AND I DON'T THINK THAT --.
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 07 STATE 236670

Q. THIS STATEMENT BECOMES MEANINGLESS IF WE DON'T HAVE SOME KIND OF BACKGROUND CONCERNING THE MILITARY SITUATION AND AN ASSESSMENT OF WHERE WE STAND.

A. I DON'T THINK IT IS MEANINGLESS AT ALL. THIS IS A STATEMENT OF --

Q. IF THEY ARE GOING TO CONTINUE FIGHTING, AND SARKIS IS GOING TO BE THE PRESIDENT WITHOUT AN ARMY OR WITHOUT ANY CENTRAL AUTHORITY, THEN WE HAVE GOTTEN NOWHERE, AND THIS IS AN EXPRESSION OF HOPE.

A. IT IS AN EXPRESSION OF THE AMERICAN POSITION WITH REGARD TO THE PROSPECTS FOR --.

Q. I AM NOT DOUBTING YOUR CHARACTERIZATION, I AM SIMPLY SAYING THAT IT DOESN'T MEAN VERY MUCH TO US IN TERMS OF REALITY UNLESS WE HAVE SOME CLEAR IDEA ABOUT THE AMERICAN THINKING OF THE MILITARY SITUATION AND THE POTENTIAL STABILITY IN THE AREA.

A. I SUGGEST THAT THE STATEMENT BE READ AND STUDIED THOROUGHLY BEFORE WE ATTEMPT TO GO INTO ANY DISCUSSION OF IT. AS I SAY, I WILL ATTEMPT TO GET ANSWERS TO THOSE QUESTIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN POSED, AND WHICH MIGHT BE APPROPRIATELY ANSWERED AT THIS TIME. BUT, AGAIN, I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT FROM THIS PODIUM WE WILL OFFER MILITARY ASSESSMENTS OF THE CIVIL WAR IN LEBANON AS A SITREP WHICH MIGHT BEAR UPON THIS STATEMENT OF AMERICAN POLICY.

Q. I WOULD LIKE TO POSE ANOTHER QUESTION ON THE LEBANESE STATEMENT. AT THE BOTTOM OF PAGE TWO, AGAIN, YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT THE NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF THE BROADER MIDDLE EAST QUESTION, WHICH WOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE CONCERNS OF THE STATES OF THE AREA FOR THEIR SECURITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY.

CAN YOU SPECIFY WHICH STATES YOU ARE REFERRING TO?

A. I CANNOT SPECIFY. AS I SAY, THIS IS A STATEMENT OF UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 08 STATE 236670

PRINCIPLE ON OUR PART, AND I AM NOT IN A POSITION HERE TO OFFER YOU PRECISION AS TO WHAT STATES ARE ALLUDED TO IN THIS POLICY STATEMENT.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS POSTED IN THE DEPARTMENT PRESS OFFICE IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION TAKEN AT THE SEPTEMBER 22 PRESS BRIEFING:

Q. HAVE THERE BEEN ANY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS WITH REGARD

TO THE MURDERS OF AMBASSADOR MELOY AND HIS COMPANIONS IN
BEIRUT?

A. THERE ARE NO RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS CASE TO
REPORT. THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED
TO THE OBJECTIVE OF BRINGING TO JUSTICE THE PERPETRATORS
OF THIS CRIME AND WE CONTINUE TO EXERT EVERY EFFORT
THROUGH VARIOUS CHANNELS TOWARD THIS END. UNFORTUNATELY,
THE UNSETTLED CONDITIONS IN BEIRUT COMPLICATE THESE
EFFORTS, BUT WE ARE CERTAIN THAT ALL PARTIES IN THE AREA --
INCLUDING THE PLO -- ARE FULLY AWARE OF OUR DETERMINATION
TO SEE THAT JUSTICE IS DONE.

ROBINSON

UNQUOTE KISSINGER

UNCLASSIFIED

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 16 SEP 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INAUGURATION, PRESS RELEASES, PRESS CONFERENCES, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE236670
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/P:EOJONES:RGH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D760360-0220
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t197609108/baaaeqfk.tel
Line Count: 721
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 14
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cahillha
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 AUG 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 AUG 2004 by oatisao>; APPROVED <07 DEC 2004 by cahillha>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - SEPTEMBER 23
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, LE, US, (SARKIS, ELIAS)
To: BEIRUT
AMMAN
MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006